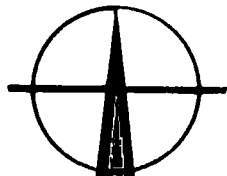


BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*



April-May, 1973

Celebration

***Do You
Have Time?***



BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME XXXIII

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MODERN DAY IDOL WORSHIP

I detect a sad situation occurring in our churches. It's sad because it resembles very closely the logic of the world.

The world no longer condemns abortions, gamblings, drugs but rather legalizes these activities or is feverishly attempting to legalize them. By legalizing these activities they remove the sin and rid themselves of their responsibility to do something about them. When the state permits this to happen it is but another sign that it is corrupting itself. I believe many of us have made a similar attitude change towards television. The talk today is not at all against having this corrupting influence in the home but rather that we must try to control it. It apparently is not even a matter of legality or of Christian liberty anymore — that's been conceded long ago. Now we must make it our business to curtail its devastating influence.

I cannot help but think that the television is really an idol. According to the *New Bible Dictionary* article on "Idolatry,"

"The story of Old Testament religion could be told for the most part in terms of a tension between the spiritual conception of God and worship . . . and various pressures, such as idolatry, which attempted to debase and materialize the national religious consciousness and practice."

This is remarkably true of the television set — it debases and materializes one's religious consciousness and practice. The article goes on to state that

"We do not find an ascending from idolatry to the pure worship of God, but rather a people possessing a pure worship, and a spiritual theology, constantly fighting . . . religious seductions which, nevertheless often claim the mass of the people."

Today, we also, who believe we possess the pure and true doctrines of salvation, are constantly fighting the seductions of an idol — the television set, which nevertheless claims the support of many of our people. An idol was a master who was faithfully served. It demanded service and controlled

its servers. As they bowed the knee and sacrificed to these heathen abominations, so we also and our children prostrate ourselves before these modern abominations and sacrifice God's precious time to them. It was typical of idol worshippers to rise up in wrath and indignation against anyone who spoke out against these evil practices. Many who read this article will no doubt have the very same feelings against its author. They have to try to defend this abomination because it is unable to defend itself. It proudly and calmly sits in its place of honor knowing full well that his servers will do their utmost to protect him from slander. I contend that the little good (if there is any at all) does not justify the existence of this idol in our Christian homes. Even this so called good is perverted by human wisdom and philosophy. The nature films are evolutionistic, the news is biased and stresses the sensational, the educational films are humanistic, the advertisements are generally morally perverted and the sporting events, promote false hero worship. Television viewing does not lead one to the true worship of our God, Jehovah, but rather leads us in our thoughts and even in our actions away from Him. This is exactly what Satan desires. How we can talk about controlling such an enemy as this, is beyond my understanding.

In I Corinthians 8:4, Paul says ". . . we know that an idol is nothing in the world" but I Cor. 10:20 "that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye have fellowship with devils." Paul would agree that there is no sin in the television set as a piece of furniture but he would certainly cry out against the evil sacrifices spewed out of the set to Satan himself and he "would not that ye have fellowship with devils." I'm sure the apostle Paul would not have tolerated the presence of one of these devilish idols in his home and yet it is a rather common practice among leaders in our own churches and schools to do so.

It is detrimental to the welfare of the

sheep when the shepherd makes a league with the wolves. They see the shepherd consorting with the enemies and soon fail to recognize the wolves as enemies but rather as friends. Any words of warning or caution from the shepherd will understandably fall on deaf ears. The sheep will soon follow the example of their shepherd to their inevitable destruction for the wolf comes in the night all unsuspected and snatches them away. Are our leaders blind leaders of the blind in respect to the terrible power of the television set? More than once I've heard the justification for television in the form of "Well the minister has it." Has Satan laid a snare for God's people in the very form of His ambassadors? I shudder to think that this could possibly be true.

In the Old Testament, Israel and Judah often sacrificed their children to heathen gods. King Ahaz "made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathens, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel" (II Kings 16:5). The Psalmist deplors this evil practice. "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Caanan . . ." Parents no longer sacrifice their children's blood but much worse they sacrifice their souls to the evil influence of this modern day Molech. It is a confirmed fact that many of the covenant youth in our churches are more familiar with the priests for our modern day Molechs than they are with the heroes of faith in God's Holy Word. Consider in your own homes and compare the number of hours spent in prostration before this horrible enemy of God's people and the hours spent rejoicing in the glorious works of God.

Not only is this modern day idol enemy number one in our covenant homes, but also it is the chief enemy of our covenant day schools. Our schools in many instances are fighting a losing battle against this tyrannical ruler of the mind. Don't expect peak performances from your children in their school work if you have this machine in your home. School work and studying come off second best every time. Sure, they appear to study for a short period but their

mind is not on their studies, but on the T.V. schedule for the night. Hurriedly and carelessly they complete their school work so they won't miss their favorite T.V. personality. School work becomes more of a drudgery than ever before in comparison to the excitement of the sports event or Western that they are missing. Just notice the disgust, disappointment, and even anger your children exhibit when you tell them to go to their rooms and study and to turn off the television. They'll rebel loudly. Disgruntled, they'll go to their room hating school and school work a little more. They turn against God given instruction for Satanic entertainment. It is shameful, the amount of God's precious time that is sacrificed each day by our children, young people and even grown ups to this hideous monster of depravity.

If you really want to see what a grip this idol has on your children, just consider what their reaction will be to the announcement that you have decided to get rid of the television set. Be prepared for a verbal onslaught of vile disrespect and bad language.

Even the world recognized the evil influence this devilish machine exerts on the youth of our country. So much more we as covenant parents should see its awful influence on the covenant seed. Let Christ remind us that "whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (Mark 9:42). Most of what television has to offer God's people is offensive and this includes the cartoons and children's programs for the little ones. If we willfully submit our believing children to the wicked influence of the world and the devil in their television programs we offend "these little ones that believe."

The Old Testament prophets came with God's Word to the kings, the priests and the people, against idolatry. They did not beat around the bush or hedge the question of idolatry. They condemned this evil practice and demanded that the people rid themselves of their idols. It was not a matter of controlling idolatry but rather a matter of getting rid of the evil and destroying it.

When we allow the evil influence of Satan to enter our homes and dominate them we must not expect God's grace to help us. Pious platitudes are not sufficient. Radical action must be taken. We need to rid ourselves of these modern daily idols. We can no more control the television set than we can control our own evil impulses.

By nature we are no better equipped to control these modern day idols than Israel their ancient idols of wood and stone. Let us ask God for grace — not to be able to control this evil — but for grace to be able to give it up and rid our lives of this evil menace to our spiritual existence.

JOHN KALSBECK JR.

SPECIAL*

CELEBRATION

DAVE LANTING

This is the first in a series of articles in which I will attempt to incorporate poetry (some familiar and some of obscure origin) into an essay or article on a single theme in orthodox essay form or in some imagistic form as I have done here. Note: The style of this piece is designed to arrest the imagination at the outset and to carry it along flowingly in the dance of the celebration. D.L.

And in every moment and minute and hour and second and section of time, for time comes in sections to us (ungodlike), there is atmosphere of good and air of evil and there is room to celebrate. In every part of us in time there is a celebration of good or the festival of evil:

For everything in its season, and for every activity under heaven its time:

*a time to be born and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to uproot;
a time to kill and a time to heal;
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time for mourning and a time for
dancing; . . .*

Ecc. 6:1-5

so let us therefore, breathing in the wind of the Spirit, celebrate the only good which we know from the Word. Let us celebrate in each section of time (in each section of us) that good which we know from the Word. From the Word we know the good

*We are happy to announce the beginning of a new literature department under the direction of Dave Lanting of our Loveland congregation. We trust that the Lord will bless this and all our labor that it may serve to the glory of His holy name.

and the goodness of God and so let us celebrate the good and so let us celebrate the goodness and so celebrate God.

R. H. Rupp calls celebration an "assent to reality in corporate action"¹ which is to say:

MOVEMENT

*And motion
And motion in the body,
Being moved in the mind
Back to bodily motion
Of ecstatic exultation
And exulted motion of the mind and
body
In the ascent to the essence of reality,
Saying, Yes! to realness,
Realness of the good and goodness
And reality of God.*

And we know the goodness and the good and God from the Word. Let us then celebrate the knowledge of good in the goodness of exalted movement and let us celebrate.

But since Adam there is the knowledge of evil as well as of goodness and also the celebration of evil in every section of each man's time. Walt Whitman sings:

*I celebrate myself, and sing myself
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as
good as belongs to you.²*

Which is to say that he celebrates himself as the essence of all men and celebrates the good of the atoms of Man and he celebrates the good which he knows from each section of Man which are the atoms of the first Adam and he celebrates the good which

is no good at all, but evil. But let us not celebrate the evil of the first Adam but let us in our own sections of time celebrate the good of the second Adam which is the Word and which is God and which is good. Let us therefore celebrate in our seconds the second Adam.

Wallace Stevens tells of the horrible festival of man celebrating, not God, but infinite stone:

*Supple and turbulent, a ring of men
Shall chant in orgy on a summer morn
Their boistrous devotion to the sun,
Not as a god, but as a god might be
Naked among them, like a savage source.
Their chant shall be a chant of paradise,
Out of their blood, returning to the sky;
And in their chant shall enter, voice by
voice,
The windy lake wherein their lord
delights.
The trees, like seraphin, and echoing hills,
That choir among themselves long
afterward.
They shall know well the heavenly
fellowship
Of men that perish and of summer morn.
And whense they come and whither they
shall go
The dew upon their feet shall manifest.³*

And Israel in the wilderness celebrated evil and the chosen people celebrated the golden calf which is not half as good as celebrating the good and which is no good at all and no celebration at all but the bodily motions of the dancing in the festival of evil. And therefore let us not bend the knee to the calf but let us bow down in exulted ecstasy of motion of celebration of goodness and the celebration of the good. Let us therefore dance with great abandon as David did in the streets of the holy city and let us dance, abandoning our doubts and abandoning our sin and abandoning ourselves but never abandoning our sure knowledge or our true faith or our holiness; but let us dance, in righteousness, with great abandon, the dance of the celebration of the good and the goodness and the celebration of God. And let us sing in exultation of celebration:

Four

*. . . . a new song to the Lord,
for He has done marvellous deeds;
His right hand and holy arm have won
Him victory.*

*The Lord has made His victory known;
He has displayed His righteousness to
all nations.*

*He has remembered his constancy,
His love for the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.*

*Acclaim the Lord, all men on earth,
break into songs of joy, sing psalms.
Sing psalms in the Lord's honour with
the harp,
with the harp and with music of the
psaltery.⁴*

In the festival of evil the Three Dog Night shouts:

*Celebrate!
Celebrate!*

Dance to the music.

Which is to say celebrate with your motions in your moments the dance of the music of the festival of evil. But let us dance with our motions in our moments the dance of the exulted ecstasy of the celebration of good and of the celebration of goodness and of the celebration of God.

*Celebrate!
Celebrate!*

Dance to the music.

Dance to the music of the spheres

Which sing the glory of God

And the goodness of God.

*And dance the dance of the celebration
of good.*

I celebrate myself.

I celebrate my body in the body of Christ,

*I celebrate my mind in the mind of the
Spirit*

And I celebrate every atom of myself

*Which moves in the dance of the
celebration*

Of the second Adam;

Who is good and who is God.

I celebrate well if I

Celebrate

The only good.

Well, then, let us celebrate in our sections of time the celebration of good, and

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the celebration of goodness, and the celebration of God. Celebrate!

FOOTNOTES

1. Rupp, R. H., *Celebration in Fiction in the Postwar Years*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957.
2. Whitman, Walt. *The Works of Walt Whitman*, Vol. 1, "The Collected Poetry," p. 62. Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1968.
3. Stevens, Wallace. "Sunday Morning," *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957.
4. Psalm 68:1-9, *The New English Bible*.



DONNA VAN UFFELEN

Our Wonderful Heavenly Guide

When the Israelites left Egypt for Canaan, a difficult and treacherous journey lay ahead of them. Many hardships and temptations faced them as they travelled their long way, during which time God led them in the form of a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. Yet, even though God was guiding them all along their way, a great number of the people rebelled and expressed the desire to turn back to ungodly Egypt where they felt the oppression which they had faced was not so great as the long hard journey.

This journey of the children of Israel was a picture of the pilgrimage which is before all the children of God. We are born dead in sin and under the constant oppression of the forces of the world, facing trials and temptations all along our life's journey to the Heavenly Canaan. Just as the children of Israel did, we too must endure countless occasions when our flesh tells us to turn the way of the world, to "turn back to Egypt." Therefore, during the pilgrimage of this life, we must make God our leader, use the Bible as our chart, and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit on our way to Heaven, our final home.

*I seek no guide save only thee,
Nor ask the way thou leadest me!
My only prayer: "Lord may I know
The work that Thou wouldst have me do?"*

*If in far lands, Thou leadest me,
'Cross arid plains, or storm-vexed sea,
By pathways dark, or lone, or drear,
Clasping thy hand, I will not fear.*

. . . unknown

It is extremely necessary that we have this comfort in life and that we follow the guides which God has given to us. There are many enemies, dangers, and pitfalls which lurk behind the rocks and bushes all along our pathway of life, waiting to snatch us from off our road. And indeed the world does use many enticing methods to try to draw us away from this road to everlasting life. And therefore we need this wonderful guidance of God, for our weak flesh is always willing to fall along the way and enjoy the pleasures of the world.

It is also important that we praise God for these guides which He has given us. God made Himself our leader, we did not choose to be His followers; God gave us the will and desire to follow His chart, the Bible. Even as God wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone, He writes on our hearts, through the Holy Spirit, His Word. God's Word is a "lamp unto our feet, and a light upon our path." David also writes, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." Of ourselves, we would ignore this chart, but the Holy Spirit guides us in the

way. And not only is it necessary that we praise God for His guidance in the past, but we must also pray for God's guidance in the future. For prayer leads to praise, and praise prepares for prayer.

The Bible and the Holy Spirit guard us from evils and our enemies. God often leads us through trying times, but this too is His will, and as we all know, "All things work together for good to them that

love God." God does this to show us how powerless our weak sinful flesh really is, and how mighty God is. If God were not there to lead us, we could not take a single step on the road to our heavenly Canaan.

Even as the Israelites were led by God through the cloud, we too are led by God, through His Word and Spirit, to our Heavenly home. God truly is "Our Wonderful Heavenly Guide."

FEATURES

CONFESSION OF FAITH

HENRY JAY KUIPER

The public confession of my faith is one of the highest focal points in my life as a Christian believer. Until this day, I have always been a member of the church; however, today I become a communicant member. This is a day of great joy, not only for myself but also for the parents, teachers, and ministers that have taught me over the past nineteen years. They now are seeing a part of the fruit of their many years of diligent Protestant Reformed instruction. While in their presence, I can almost sense this satisfaction arising from within them. Truly, one can see this is a day of great joy. To more fully understand this, we must look into the past to see how this all came about.

Back in the not too distant past, I was born unto God-fearing parents, which was just exactly how God predestined this to be. Shortly after I was born, I was presented to my parents. After a short discussion with the doctors, my father and my mother commenced praying, not only thanking God for a healthy son; but also asking for the strength and courage they knew they would need in bringing me up in the truths of God's Word.

They knew that this world was becoming increasingly more corrupt every day. I didn't realize it then, but from the time I was small, prayer would become a chief part of my life. As I grew older and sat around the table at mealtime, the first word I was instructed to say was "Amen," in its baby-abbreviated form.

After five years on earth, I was sent each

day from my home to school. No, not any school, but to our own Protestant Reformed Christian School. Here I was compelled to memorize Bible texts and instructed in many subjects all somewhat dissimilar from each other, yet all centered around and upon God. I was also brought to church twice each Sunday for worship services and once each week for either catechism or Sunday School. God even saw to it that I might attend our own Protestant Reformed High School. For many years now, different ministers, teachers, and the same dedicated parents have brought me up and instructed me in the paths that I should walk.

As I now reach the age of discretion, I can constantly feel Satan pressuring me to sin. I know he is constantly scheming and plotting various ways to pull me from these truths I have been instructed and brought up in. But God has seen fit to give me strength to fight him off; yet, I still fall from time to time. Now I can use that tremendous gift of prayer which God has so graciously bestowed upon his children. God, through Jesus Christ, has given me the faith to believe that I belong to Him.

Now, with no pressure from any of my instructors (ministers, teachers, and parents), I go before the congregation, in which God has given me a name and a place, to confess in their presence my faith in Christ. What joy I feel; it's almost ecstasy; I feel on top of the whole world. Yet, I must constantly fight off the devil who has now become even more clever and devious than ever before. Amid my great joy,

God places before me trials of my faith in addition to the devil's temptations. I now find myself knocked from the top of the world into most lowly states. Now, more increasingly and fervently than ever, I find myself running to God in prayer, beseeching His help. His grace alone proves sufficient. He guides me through each trial, gives me

strength to fight off the devil, and gives me grace to ask for forgiveness when I fail.

Truly one can see that God establishes His covenant in the line of continued generations. Today and every day, I thank Him for my Christian upbringing, realizing that this instruction was basic to my present walk on this earth as a Christian.

DO YOU HAVE TIME?

LOIS HOEKSEMA

Ephesians 5:15 and 16: *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

Several weeks ago as I was looking at my mail, I discovered a brown and tan envelope from BEACON LIGHTS. Before I even opened it, I said to myself, "They're probably asking me to write an article. Well, I don't have time to write an article. I just don't have time!" But as I read the letter asking me to write an article about the Christian's use of time, a wave of guilt swept over me and I knew that I *did* have time to write an article for the magazine of our Protestant Reformed youth. We, as young people, and all God's children around us, must constantly be reminded that we are creatures of time, that life is short, and that we are called to redeem that time.

God is a God of eternity, but in order that his creatures might have an orderly life, God created another creature — time. What is that creature of God? Superficially, of course, we may define time as the succession of moments. Perhaps because of the mysterious nature of time, we find that it is rather impossible to define. There are several characteristics, however, that we should notice. It is a reality of which we are constantly reminded, with which we are always in contact. Yet, the more we contemplate it, the more mysterious and incomprehensible it is. Let us say, first, that it is itself a creature. Time was created by God in the beginning, distinct from the Eternal, the Creator of time. This creature is not a bit of the Creator, time not a bit of eternity; rather, creature and Creator, time and eternity, are essentially different.

Secondly, time is the undeniable and inescapable characteristic and law and bond of all that is created. Time is the stream on which we are borne continually, always advancing, never returning, showing us the scene once and not again. Time is that invisible and often unnoticed stream that flows on and we with it: it picks us up at our first moment, speeds ahead through childhood, youth, the strength of life, old age, and lays us down in the rest of death.

Thus we see time as an opportunity, the full measure of God-given opportunities and occasions to walk in those good works which He has prepared for us. Time brings all those opportunities and occasions and whether we grasp the opportunity or not, snatches it away and it never returns.

That time we are called to redeem, that is, to pay a ransom or a price. We must do this with respect to the full measure of the opportunities to walk in the works which God has prepared for us as they are brought to us in time. We must seize them, make the most of them, get all we can out of time, and use them for the glory of God.

In our entire walk, in everything we do, we must walk as children of light, not as fools, but as wise. It is a fool who cannot judge reality and time in the light of eternity; his wisdom is of the earth; his life is filled with eating, drinking and enjoyment. He is a slave of himself, of pleasure, of lust, of vain glory.

We, too, by nature are fools, although in principle we are wise because we are redeemed. And so through all our life we

continually hear questions ringing in our ears. "Where shall I go — to society or to that important game? What shall I do tonight — finish my homework or watch that good movie that's been advertised for so long? What shall I read — the *Standard Bearer* or that paperback novel I picked up the other day? What will be my entertainment on Friday night — should I join the world for a few drinks in one of their bars, or maybe see one of their latest movies? Where will I be this summer during the P.R.Y.P. convention? How will I use my time at that convention?"

I have cited several situations which may and do arise in our walk, but we must remember that our walk in life is more than scattered examples to which we must give special consideration. Rather, we must realize that our walk is a whole outlook, a whole system of priorities. We have to walk circumspectly, and carefully, not carelessly and at loose ends, carried along and tossed about in the maelstrom of this world. With each step that we take along the pathway of life, we must ask ourselves, "What *is* important to me?" and then, "What *must* be important to me?" And because our 1973 convention is only a short time away, we should ask ourselves another question, "Am I going to this convention willing to use my time as the world uses it, even though I am separate from them? Or do I have a wholehearted desire to use my time to strengthen my own faith and the faith of others?"

Perhaps you hear the voice of the fool answering loudly, "I am going to this convention to have *fun*. I am going to skip society to see that game. I'll read my new novel instead of the *Standard Bearer*." And then you ask yourself, "How do I make the right alternative important to me?" And the answer is found in prayer, in instruction, in God's Word, in fighting against that old man of sin. Step by step we watch — praying — that we fall not into temptation. We pray that God will strengthen us to do the right, correct us for our iniquity, and keep us from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Why is it so important that we use our time properly. We have only a few years and we are seriously called in God's Word to use those few years of our lifetime to

serve God for preparation for serving him perfectly in eternity. Psalm 39 shows us this importance in verses four and five: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."

And because we have such a small beginning, it is so easy to follow the temptations of the world, and to be pulled in by the suction of things below. There are enemies and pits, snares and stumbling-blocks; there are anxiety and sorrow, cares and troubles. And all these forces work against our small beginning. They allure and they threaten; they tempt us to be lax and faithless; they pull us down into the depths of anxiety and care.

So we must fight against those temptations by seeing that we walk circumspectly. We have to put on the armor of God and fight the battle of faith. And we must pray with the psalmist David: "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more" (Psalm 39:12 and 13).

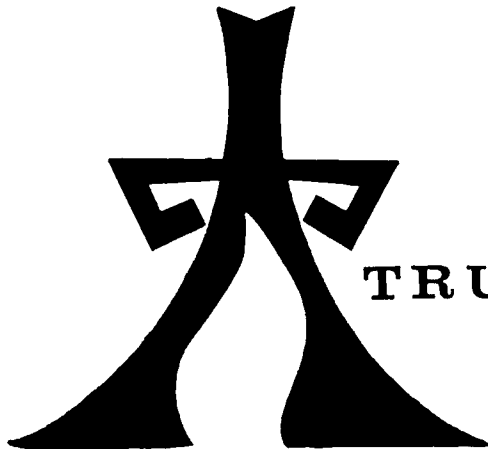
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Loveland Coll.	\$34.01
Hudsonville Coll.	99.95
South East Coll.	37.91
John B. Lubbers	7.00
Hull Coll.	30.02
Randolph Coll.	22.55
South West Coll.	40.17
G. Van Overloop	7.00
Holland Coll.	47.50
Cecil Vander Molen	7.00
Peter Reitsma	12.00
South East Sing. Coll.	32.00
South West Coll.	64.81
Robert Velting	7.00

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

Now that spring has come preparations are being made for the 1973 Prot. Ref. Young People's convention which will be held August 13-18. The Junior and Senior Societies of Hope Prot. Ref. Church in Walker, Michigan will host this convention. Registration will take place on Monday afternoon and evening, August 13, and Tuesday morning, the 14th for late registration. We will provide lodging in the homes of church members. A special invitation is extended for the weekend before the conven-

tion for early arrivals as well as the weekend following the convention. *Soldiers of Christ* will be our theme based on the text of Ephesians 6:11-18: the three points under the theme are, first *The enemy in battle*; second *The armor of God*; and third *The victory of faith*. Many interesting activities are also being planned. Hope's young people are looking forward to having a large turnout so that we as Prot. Ref. Young People may enjoy this opportunity of covenant fellowship.



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

Secret

Why askest thou after My name, seeing it is Secret? — Malak Yehovah

Christiana's widow, Christiana, now appears upon the stage. That name became hers the day she and her children entered upon the pilgrim life. Her husband had gone over Jordan, and as she would neither see nor hear of him any more, her thoughts began to work in her mind. She had lost her husband. The loving bond of the marriage relation was utterly broken between them. None like the bereaved know the many sad recollections in remembrance of the loss of loving relations. This cost her many a tear. What was worse was the recollection of her sins, for she had been

guilty of such terrible things as the hardening of her heart against the Way her husband had taken, and the keeping of her babes in ignorance. Then Christiana began to experience that through the law comes the knowledge of sin, and to cry out, O wretched one that I am! who shall deliver me? and, God be merciful to me a sinner! and, What must I do to be saved? "Were it not for the misery of their own hearts, God's best saints would fall asleep and go back like other men," like Temporary. It was then, when loaded with her guilt, when she had prayed to God and talked

to her children about the Pilgrim Way, that there was a knock on her door. She called through the closed door, If thou comest in God's name, come in! Then he at the door replied, Amen! and opened it to enter and greet her with, Peace be to this house. The man introduced himself with, My name is Secret. I dwell with those that are on high. Christiana, the Merciful One (in answer, already, to her prayer for mercy!) hath sent me to tell thee that He is a God ready to forgive, and that He taketh delight to multiply the pardon of offenses. He calls thee to come to His presence, to His table, and that He will feed thee with the fat of His House. Then Secret gave her a letter from her husband's King, which, on opening, it gave forth the odor of the best perfume (Song of Solomon 1:3), and was written in letters of gold. The letter informed her that she should take the way of a stranger and pilgrim, for that was the way to come to the Heavenly Jerusalem and to dwell in the presence of the King with fulness of joy. At this, Christiana was completely overcome, and begged her visitor to carry her and the children there to worship the King. Then said Secret, Christiana, the bitter is before the sweet. Thou, as thy husband, must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Christiana then found herself in good company. "For the froward are an abomination to the Lord, but His Secret is with the righteous" (Prov. 3:31). On this Matthew Henry wrote, "Sinners are hated of God. but saints are loved. The froward sinners . . . are abomination to the Lord. He that hates nothing that He has made, abhors those who have thus marred themselves; they are not only *abominable* in His sight, but an *abomination*; the righteous therefore have no reason to envy them, for they have His secret with them. They are His favorites; He has that communion with them which is a secret to the world, and in which they have a joy that a stranger does not intermeddle with. He communicates the secret tokens of His love, His covenant is with them. They know His mind and the meanings and the intentions of His providence better than others can." "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He

revealeth His secret unto His servants" (Amos 3:7).

There you have the heart of the matter. Scripture puts it this way: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Ps. 25:14). The divine Secret is the communication of the secret tokens of His love to His beloved. The word secret itself means, 1. *love-seat, divan*, where friends sit in intimate conversation; 2. *familiar intercourse, intimacy*; 3. *a secret*, the idea being that of honeymoon love between bridegroom and bride. It then denotes the intimate familiarity between God and His saints, and the inner spiritual comfort they have with God in the regenerate life which is hidden from the world. "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship (of which the world knows not) one with another" (I John 1:7). "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him" (John 14:21). As God's saints, we have many secret visits of love, many refreshings and expressions of grace from Him. Then we look up and say, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness" (Ps. 17:15).

Sometimes the word (secret) refers to the spiritual knowledge of God. Christians and Christianas know more of God's mind than others. God's counsel is in the Word, and it is a further evidence of His friendship to understand His counsel, to know the mysteries of godliness. Jesus said, "I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). Let men of the world have the world. We would have the Word, we would have the Spirit. "Christ gave His Spirit to the rest of the apostles, but His purse to the son of perdition." Many are acquainted with Christianity as a report or a tradition, but only God's people know it (though as a despised hated people holding a despised, hated truth) in the love and saving power of it.

Sometimes knowing the Secret of the Lord means to have a quiet satisfaction with the dispensations of God's providences, which is a great comfort in all our afflictions. They who have the secret, the secrets

of His wisdom (Job 11:6), interpret God's providences better than others. You have such secret knowledge as to make you sharp and eagle-eyed, knowing God's mind better than others in respect to the inscrutable providences which are so offensive to the world. You know the secret of suffering, as well as the secret joy a stranger cannot intermeddle with. You know the secret of, "I shall not be moved!"

Sometimes "secret" implies the invisible blessing which cements and holds together our life embedded in the visible evidences of outward prosperity we have in the world. So Job said, "the secret of God was upon my tabernacle" (29:4). Job had been wonderfully preserved in his abundance. God's lamp shined upon his head, the way through the darkness was illuminated by His light, the Almighty was with him to prosper him materially, his children were then about him, he washed his steps with butter and the rock poured him out rivers of oil (29:1-6). In all this plenty, the Lord preserved Job and his family, so that it was said of them, "God shall hide them in the secret of His presence . . . Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion" (Ps. 31:20). David said, "In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me" (27:5). Whenever we do enjoy earthly increase, it is in a world where, in one sense, we are an open prey to inimical and powerful adversaries who seem to thrive on insatiable pillage and rapine. Yet there is a secret guard over us and all that we have, so that we are kept, the world cannot tell how. The Lord hedges us round about with the guard of a secret blessing. The Lord hates it when people make their material prosperity their comfort, their refuge and defence. What a cracked reed to lean upon! For the Lord soon enough blows it all away. But "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1). This secret place was the Holy of holies, the inner sanctum, the secret dwelling-place of God where, by faith, the mind of the saints did rest in peace. It was the Old Testament way of dwelling at the foot of the cross of Christ, where believers find refuge from the storms of life. There the wounds of Jesus crucified pour out a balm to heal

the heartaches and footsores of weary pilgrims. It was Spurgeon who wrote: "The secret tabernacle of sacrifice, and the royal pavilion of sovereignty afford a double security to the Lord's people in their worst distresses."

Jesus commanded, "When thou prayest, shut thy door and pray in Secret." That is almost like saying that praying in public is not praying at all. It is not easy to pray in public. Some Christians cannot. But the secret of praying in public is the practice of praying in secret. There are so many difficulties connected with public prayer. It has its own besetting sins, and many more distractions and temptations than secret prayer. The real essence of prayer, sometimes hard to find in public prayer, is in secret prayer. In public prayer there is the temptation to be too polished in language, too loud and too long; to have the mind encumbered with concern for beautiful expression. In secret prayer we need not be concerned with time, length of speaking, number of repetitions, or precise rhetoric. Also there are many petitions of secret prayer which never could be mentioned in the pulpit's pastoral prayer, or even in family prayer. We may freely name names in secret, and go over details of private circumstances. We can be open, care-free, out-spoken, really be ourselves in secret. There you can be your worst self, and ought to be, if you pray in good conscience. There, too, conscience is examined and made right.

Has Secret knocked on your door? If so, He speaks peace to your house.

To live is not to live for one's self alone; let us help one another.



The measure of a man's life is the well spending of it, and not the length.

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

Man's Fight Against Life – Abortion

RACHEL LUBBERS

As the hour hand on the clock of history advances to a new and untouched hour, there can suddenly be heard a loud tolling clang which rings in our ears and arouses us with terror. We suddenly see people letting go the arrows of destruction and death. These terrible arrows find as their target the lives of unborn children, and the unforgivable crime of taking life is now legalized for all those who desire an abortion. This is indeed an abrupt awakening, and an upsetting, cruel, and totally unjustifiable legalization. Screening finally several more recent historical events, we cannot help but boldly ask what man shall aim to destroy next to make for himself a more comfortable and convenient life. Certainly, God did not create man to give and take that which He alone controls – life.

It is unbelievable how a bill could be passed which allows the beginning of a human life to be taken from it and destroyed while the unborn helplessly can offer no one word of defense or protest. To me, this so very openly reveals the power, pity, and sinfulness of pure selfishness. This is selfishness that would rather allow a human being to be murdered than to try accepting that which is unwanted or which perhaps would upset their planned schedule of living. It is pathetic the way in which our nation encourages self-centeredness. Rather than abort unwanted children, we should counsel those who carry an unwanted child to help them develop a sense of concern for human life – unfinished and underdeveloped though it may be. For even if a child may be unwanted by his mother there are many couples who are waiting for that unloved child. There is an endless amount of people who would love and care for a child, but are unable to have one of their own. The list is longer than my eyes can see of people patiently standing in a line who long desperately for the richness of a child. Even more sad is the crying fact that many have already waited for years and yet they walk away in hope even

though empty armed. Yes, this is sad but yet the thought alone of a child is too precious to be torn away. Everyday more of these kind of people join the line and wait. To me there is no possible explanation for legally killing unwanted babies when actually these children are wanted and loved even before birth! I do not understand then how abortion can even be considered as an alternative.

Considering also the convenience of being able to have an abortion performed right in one's locality is a factor which will increase pre-natal murder. Before a woman had to either fly to New York or elsewhere to have a "safe" and legal abortion. This financially limited abortions and many either kept the child or gave it up to adoption centers. History is telling a mighty sad story when we set up abortion clinics and perform many daily murders just as another new job in our cities. This too offers many upsetting thoughts to those who are aware of the horror of those people who have accepted or will accept murder as their occupation! On what basis can we legalize abortions now when before we claimed that pre- and post natal murder was legally a crime? It is very confusing how and why that which was wrong now becomes right. It seems rather ironical that a country which establishes her government for the protection of life, in return greets as justifiable and legal the most unjustified murder one can dream of.

Stepping back into time and taking just a simple glance one is confused even more. In months previous to the election a great deal of time was spent in committee work, speeches, films, and advertising by both those who were in favor of and opposed to the abortion bill. Not only was there a great deal of time involved, but also there was a large expense involved. Many hours were spent as thousands of citizens throughout the state stood out the long wait in lines to vote on the issue. When we add up the amount of votes and the time it re-

quires just to do the voting alone, the amount of time grows rapidly. Then all of this valuable time and money is promptly wasted when in weeks to follow the majority vote is overridden and the Supreme Court ignores the result of the election. This appears to be complete foolishness, at the least, and in direct opposition to the democratic process. Are we acquiring a new form of government—government by the Supreme Court rather than by the people?

With dreadful sadness this day is trampled into the pages of history. Man tries so desperately to conquer and control all problems that he confronts. Yet, life carries on in spite of this tragic moment in history. The sun with all its power, splendor, and beauty tries to break through and flood the earth, but it is pushed away by man's mounting sin and selfishness. The clouds race across the sky in madness and a strong gusty wind increases the rushing chaos of man's life.

No. 5. THINGS JESUS SAID: RECORDED BY JOHN

1. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world . . ."
2. "God is a spirit and they that worship him . . ."
3. "My meat is to do . . ."
4. "He that is without sin among you . . ."
5. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day . . ."
6. "I am the resurrection and the life . . ."
7. "A new commandment I give unto you, that . . ."
8. "Greater love hath no man than this, that . . ."
9. "Ye are my friends if . . ."
10. "And this is life eternal . . ."

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(Answers on page 15)

OPEN FORUM

*A reply to Mr. Jacob Kuiper, Jr.**

SUE TERPSTRA

May the child of God pray for peace in his nation or in the world? *May* he desire peace from war when his own country or his own dear ones are involved in that war? The answer is a most definite *no*. We as the children of God may have no part in doing this. Rather, the only peace which we may desire is the peace which surpasses all understanding, which comes to us from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:7, John 16:33). This is not the peace of the Reprobate (Isaiah 57:21) for they hate the law of God, but is only for those for whom the Lord has ordained peace, for those who love His law (Isaiah 26:11; Psalm 119:165). This separation between the peace of the world and the peace of the Church is also painted out by Christ (John 14:27).

Therefore, because the peace which God grants to the Elect is a different sort of

peace, our prayer for peace is not at all, or should not be at all, like that of a worldly man. Our prayer is a petition for grace from God that will enable us to see His will in every circumstance that befalls us, whether war, or peace, or persecution, or peril, or sword, because our needs are all known by the Father before we ask them of Him in prayer (Matthew 6:8). This is why the vain repetitions of the heathen are not heard by God when they think "they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matthew 6:7), and this is why we are commanded to be not like them.

The most or chief important means of glorifying God, is the means of prayer. We must not then forget what prayer is either. Rev. Hoeksema in his book "In the Sanctuary," gives a very beautiful explanation of what prayer should be for the children of God, while at the same time he shows why we so often fall short of the perfect prayer:

*See the March 1973 issue.

"How often is prayer, which properly is the chief medium for the glorification of God, considered a means to obtain the fulfillment of our own carnal desires! How often, while it should be the most humble expression of submission to the will of the Father in Heaven, it appears to be an attempt to impose our will upon the Almighty! And how frequently, while prayer is properly seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, it is nothing but the expression of our earthly desires! The reason is that we are still largely carnal, and that carnal and earthly things often weigh more heavily with us than things that are

spiritual and heavenly. It is expedient, therefore, that we always compare our own prayers with that most perfect prayer which the Lord taught us to pray . . ."

Therefore, follow after peace, but follow after a peace which is eternal and everlasting. Not after a temporal, godless peace. "And the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9).

One final note—I would like to thank Mr. Kuiper for his willingness to speak out on a topic which concerned him. I hope his endeavor is contagious, so that more young people or parents feel free to express their comments on this issue in the BEACON LIGHTS. Thank you.

BOOK REVIEW

"I'm OK—You're OK"
by THOMAS A. HARRIS, M.D.
published by Harper & Row
267 pages, \$5.95

"I'm OK—You're OK" is a study of Transactional Analysis or the structure of self in relationship to one's future.

According to Dr. Harris each person has a conflicting nature, which he illustrates in using a Parent-Adult-Child structure. To give a little insight into what he means by the P-A-C we must understand what each position is based on.

Dr. Harris speaks of the Parent as that personality which acts and decides on the basis of ideas received simply by instruction. These ideas are those which were accepted without questioning.

The Child is that personality which is motivated naturally and acts without restriction.

The Adult examines his Parent and Child and uses this data as a stepping stone from demonstrated standards and fantasied life to life as he figures it out. This is the decisive position.

From these three positions Dr. Harris shows how a person applies his feeling in a situation to the esteem he has for himself. These feelings always manufacture some combination of I'm OK—You're OK, or I'm not OK—You're not OK. The Child's

position is usually that of I'm not OK—You're OK, or an inferiority complex. The Parent position is I'm OK—You're not OK, or superiority complex. The Adult position is the ultimate goal of every person supposedly. This position maintains that I'm OK—You're OK, or equal balance to oneself and fellow human.

Harris goes on to show the different problems that arise and how each situation may affect various individuals. He contends that the "cause and effect" nature of situations will not solve problems but man's ability to contemplate the future or estimate probabilities and thereby analyze a transaction. He goes on to show different transactions and analyzes each to show the weaknesses of most and the strength of others.

Dr. Harris also contends that often a person's ability to face each life situation becomes impaired and psychiatric treatment becomes necessary. It is here he shows the advantages of group treatment over against individual treatment because it encourages the Child to relax and laugh, and in turn is supportive and considerate to the Parent while looking for new answers for the Adult.

Situations which the reader delves into with Harris are connected to our responsibility, values, morals, and social and religious obligations.

My attention was especially drawn to his

look at theology. His theory is that one should not allow theology to limit a person to certain beliefs accepted on the fact that forefathers taught them. According to Dr. Harris religion should leave one with the feeling of I'm OK—You're OK. He holds to rebirth—that of the natural Child.

A summary of the whole foundation for the betterment of society is found in Dr. Harris' closing statements, where he states that science has changed things making it possible to do away with the problems causing personal upheaval. A direct quotation may be revealing to his whole philosophy. "In the beginning man's mind grew and developed in service to his own survival. Can we now turn the brain to new tasks of the survival of all people of the world? Can the gift of life and our brief span of existence on this earth be enjoyed to the fullest of human spiritual capacities? . . . We believe we have found an opening . . ." The conclusion one might draw is that he believes the problem has been faced and worked on and now we are building a better society.

It is not my responsibility as of now to comment on these positions of Dr. Harris but Mr. Huisken will give his critique on this work in a later issue.

KATHY KOOLE

Answers

No. 5. THINGS JESUS SAID: RECORDED BY JOHN

1. ". . . but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17.
2. ". . . must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24.
3. ". . . the will of him that sent me and finish his work." John 4:34.
4. ". . . let him first cast a stone at her." John 8:7.
5. ". . . the night cometh when no man can work." John 9:4.
6. ". . . he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." John 11:25.
7. ". . . that ye love one another." John 13:34.
8. ". . . a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.
9. ". . . he do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14.
10. ". . . and that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3.

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

JEANNE KARSEMEYER

From our Southwest Church:

On the evening of February 25 the Choral Society presented a program under the direction of Mr. Claire Kuiper. A special number was given by Mrs. J. Slopsma on the marimba.

From our Hull Church:

Public confession of faith was made by Mr. and Mrs. Allen Drieseu, Rod Brunsting, LaVonne De Boer, Ken Kooiker and Joel Kooima on April 1.

The Young People's Banquet was held on April 9 at the Doon Community Building. Rev. Lanting was the speaker, and there was a discussion on inviting the 1974 convention to Iowa.

From our Hope, Walker Church:

The membership papers of Mrs. Mark Scholten have been received from the Christian Reformation Church.

A Beacon Light's singspiration was held after church on April 8. Mr. Gerry Kuiper led the singing, and special numbers were

Hope's quartette, a solo by Arnold Dykstra, and two songs by a group of first and second grade girls from Hope School.

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Kamphuis rejoice in the birth of a son, Dale Edward, on March 5.

Jack Huizenga has been transferred to Fort Riley, Kansas, where he will be stationed for the rest of his days in the service. His new address is:

Pvt. Jack A. Huizinga 362-60-3282
Co. A 1st BN 28th Infantry
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442

From our First Church:

Mr. Tom Oosterhouse has been received as a member in full communion from the East Paris Christian Reformed Church.

The marriage of Russell Dykstra and Carol Looyenga was solemnized on Friday evening, March 23, in our church.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Feenstra rejoice in the birth of a son, Shawn, born March 20.

The children of Adams Street School presented an all-school program entitled "Trust" on Friday evening, March 30, in First Church.

The Jr. and Sr. Mr. and Mrs. Society Banquet was held at Bylsma's Pancake House on Wednesday, April 18.

From our South Holland Church:

Public confession of faith was made by William Lenting, Jr. and Alice Marie Van Baren on April 1.

Marriage vows were spoken by Peter Zandstra and Julie Poortinga on Friday, April 6, in our church.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Lenting were blessed with a daughter, Deborah Ann, on April 5.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Hanemaayer rejoice in the birth of a daughter, Ann Elizabeth, born April 6.

On Thursday evening, April 12, all the school children related the story of Heidelberg under the theme, "God's Way Out," in speech, song, and visual aids. A collection was taken to assist the school.

From our Redlands Church:

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Gaastra were blessed with a son, Timothy Ray.

Mike McClaury and Christine Van Uffelen were united in marriage on Friday, April 6, in our church.

From our Hudsonville Church:

Jerry Vander Kolk and Shirley Gritters were joined in holy matrimony on Tuesday, April 3, in our Redlands, California church.

Ed Spoelma and Jan Lubbers were married on Friday evening, April 6, in our Hope, Walker church.

Allen Boven and Donna Kuiper spoke their vows of marriage on March 30 in our Hope Church.

The Young People's Society sponsored a casserole supper in the church basement on April 25 to raise money for the coming convention.



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